

## AGENDA ITEM X-G

Consideration of proposing amendments to Sections 12.60 through 12.77 of Board rules, concerning the offering of bachelor's and master's degrees by career schools and colleges (First Consideration)

RECOMMENDATION: Direct the staff to develop, with the assistance of an advisory committee representing the broad sectors of higher education (including career schools and colleges), recommendations on rules that would permit the offering of bachelor's and master's degrees by career schools and colleges

### Background Information:

The prior agenda item (X-F) is closely related to this one. Numerous career schools and colleges in Texas (and around the country) are accredited by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS). That agency has applied for "recognition" under Board rules — a request the staff does not support for reasons set forth under the prior agenda item. If the Board accepts the staff recommendation and does not extend recognition to ACICS, the only way for those career schools and colleges who wish to offer bachelor's and master's degrees to do so is to obtain from the Board a certificate of authority to award degrees under the provisions of the Texas Education Code, Chapter 61, Subchapter G. Board rules implementing those provisions require the holders of certificates of authority to seek accreditation by a recognized accreditor. The schools in question do not want to change accreditors — from ACICS to the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, for example.

An alternate route for career schools and colleges to gain approval to offer bachelor's and master's degrees could be developed under other provisions of the Texas Education Code. The complexity of the issues involved, and the importance of resolving them in best possible way, deserve careful analysis and deliberation. The staff therefore proposes to explore this matter carefully and bring recommendations to the Board at its July 2004 meeting to permit the offering of bachelor's and master's degrees by career schools and colleges.